



RECEIVED

JUN 22 1983

E.P.A. - D.L.F.C.
STATE OF ILLINOIS

DATE: June 20, 1983
TO: Division File ✓
FROM: P. M. McCarthy *PM*
SUBJECT: LPC 11910504 - Madison County - Venice/GMI and Bliss

As a follow up to the December 21, 1982 interview with David Covert, former employee of Bliss Oil Company, Jay Evans and this writer visited the above referenced facility.

Prior to contacting the owner of the property, we conducted a background investigation. On May 10, 1983, we determined land ownership at the Madison County Courthouse. The nearly fifteen acres, on which the two 92,000 gallon tanks are located, are owned by GMI Corporation. The president of GMI is Wayne A. Brent, 103 Denbigh Terrace, Ballwin, Missouri. We then contacted the Division of Criminal Investigation of the Department of Law Enforcement. They conducted a computer search, attempting to determine if a relationship existed between Bliss Waste Oil Service, Russell Bliss or Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. and Wayne A. Brent or his two companies, GMI and Midwest Equipment and Removal Corporation. We felt a good possibility existed, since Mr. Brent's home address is near Mr. Bliss'. However, this search revealed no known relationship.

On June 8, 1983, prior to visiting the subject area, we contacted the Venice Police Department. We met with Chief Farris Smith and Officer Joe Mehan. They had no information on Midwest Equipment and Removal Corporation, nor had they seen any "Bliss" trucks at this facility, that they could recall.

We proceeded to the facility, located at 1226 Bissell Street and met with Mr. Edward J. Hoffarth, warehouse manager for Midwest Equipment and Removal Corporation. Mr. Hoffarth stated that he has been at Midwest Equipment and Removal since 1981. He said he believed the tanks were empty. He requested that we contact the president of the company, Mr. Wayne A. Brent. He said Mr. Brent was scheduled to be at the site this afternoon. I asked that he have Mr. Brent call me.

In the early afternoon, Mr. Brent called and we scheduled a meeting at 2:30 p.m. Upon meeting, Mr. Brent gave us a history of the site, and particularly the two tanks. The tanks were originally owned by Johns-Manville Roofing Company and were used in their process. On December 4, 1964, Joseph F. Reidy and Sons, Inc. purchased the tanks. In 1975, Midwest Equipment and Removal Corporation purchased these 15 acres, not including the tanks. Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. purchased the tanks on August 2, 1979 from Reidy Oil.

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



326073

June 20, 1983

Mr. Brent stated that he has a lease agreement with Russell Bliss and he pays \$200 per quarter. Mr. Brent agreed to send us a copy of the lease agreement. According to Mr. Brent, Mr. Bliss can use the tanks between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., the operating hours of Midwest Equipment. We agreed with Mr. Brent not to sample the tanks, until first requesting permission from the owners. We also agreed to sample any oil contaminated soil, as Mr. Bliss has no control over the Midwest Equipment property.

On June 9, 1983, Jay Evans and this writer returned to 1226 Bissell St. in Venice, Illinois. We contacted Mr. Ed Hoffarth, who accompanied us as we obtained seven soil samples. (see attached sketch for approximate locations) Four samples were collected in the area immediately south of the two tanks. Three other samples, collected at various depths also were collected from the equipment storage area to the west of the tanks. This latter area was, according to Mr. Hoffarth, sprayed with oil by Bliss Waste Oil Services for weed control. He personally witnessed at least four such applications. He stated that he convinced his boss, Mr. Brent, to terminate the spraying, because the ground was becoming too soft for the equipment to maneuver. Ten photographs were taken this date, by this writer. The photographs show specific sample points and overall general conditions.

On June 9, 1983, this office received a copy of the sale contract reflecting the sale of the two 92,000 gallon tanks from Joseph F. Reidy and Sons to Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. The contract was furnished by Mr. Brent's office. According to the contract, Jerry Russell Bliss acquired these tanks on August 2, 1979. The lease agreement, also furnished by Mr. Brent's office and received on June 10, 1983, indicates that Joseph F. Reidy and Sons, Inc. purchased the tanks from Johns-Manville Products Corporation on December 4, 1964. It appears that the lease that Johns-Manville held with Reidy Oil, currently applies to Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. and GMI Corporation, the current landowner.

On June 10, 1983, Phil Van Ness was told by Thomas Immel, Russell Bliss' attorney, that Russell Bliss does not own the tanks and never did. I called Wayne Brent and relayed this information. He stated that he was confused and would contact Mr. Bliss.

On this same date, I called Mr. Brent's secretary, Dot Mullarkey. She stated, after reviewing her "Bliss file", that Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. has been paying every quarter. The last payment received, for the first quarter of 1983, was by check from Jerry Russell Bliss, Inc. She said a note attached to the check read "for rental on two oil storage tanks at 1226 Bissell". When asked what the payment was actually for, she stated it was for the privilege of having the two tanks on GMI property.

June 20, 1983

On June 13, 1983, I again called Mr. Brent. He stated that he had talked with Jerry R. Bliss on June 10, and Russell Bliss this morning. Russell Bliss told him that he does own the tanks, and that he used them even prior to owning them. He said Mr. Bliss doesn't care if we sample the tanks. After consulting with Phil Van Ness and several unsuccessful attempts to contact Jerry Russell and Russell Bliss, Jay Evans and I proceeded to Venice to sample the tanks. I contacted Mr. Hoffarth upon arrival and informed him of our plans.

We collected two samples from Tank #2. One from the south drain nozzle and the other from the manhole in the top of the tank. We lowered a sample bottle on a string to collect same. We collected one sample from the south drain nozzle of Tank No. 1. The plugs on each tank's drain nozzle were only fastened "hand tight". Also each tank's top manhole was completely open. Several photographs were taken. The samples were sealed with evidence tape. On June 14, 1983, Robert C. Mulvey, of the Permit Section, transported the soil and liquid samples to the Springfield IEPA lab from the Collinsville office.

As a part of the sampling on June 13, 1983, Jay Evans and I measured the approximate depth of the material in the two tanks. We also measured the circumference and one vertical section and calculated the capacity at 108,000 gallons, as opposed to the 92,000 gallons listed on the Sale Contract and Lease Agreement. I cannot explain the discrepancy. Assuming the capacity is approximately 108,000 gallons, the total volume of material in the tanks, is 22,770 gallons.

On June 13, 1983, I contacted Kirk Lohman, Missouri Assistant Attorney General, who has been involved in the Missouri DNR hauling license denial. Mr. Lohman stated that in the Bliss case involving Judy Piatt in Missouri, Russell Bliss testified that he had leased the Venice tanks from Reidy Oil in 1972. This would seem to substantiate Dave Covert's information.

PMM:jlrr

cc: Southern Region
Phil Van Ness

Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 2:50 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the North Northeast

Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 2:50 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

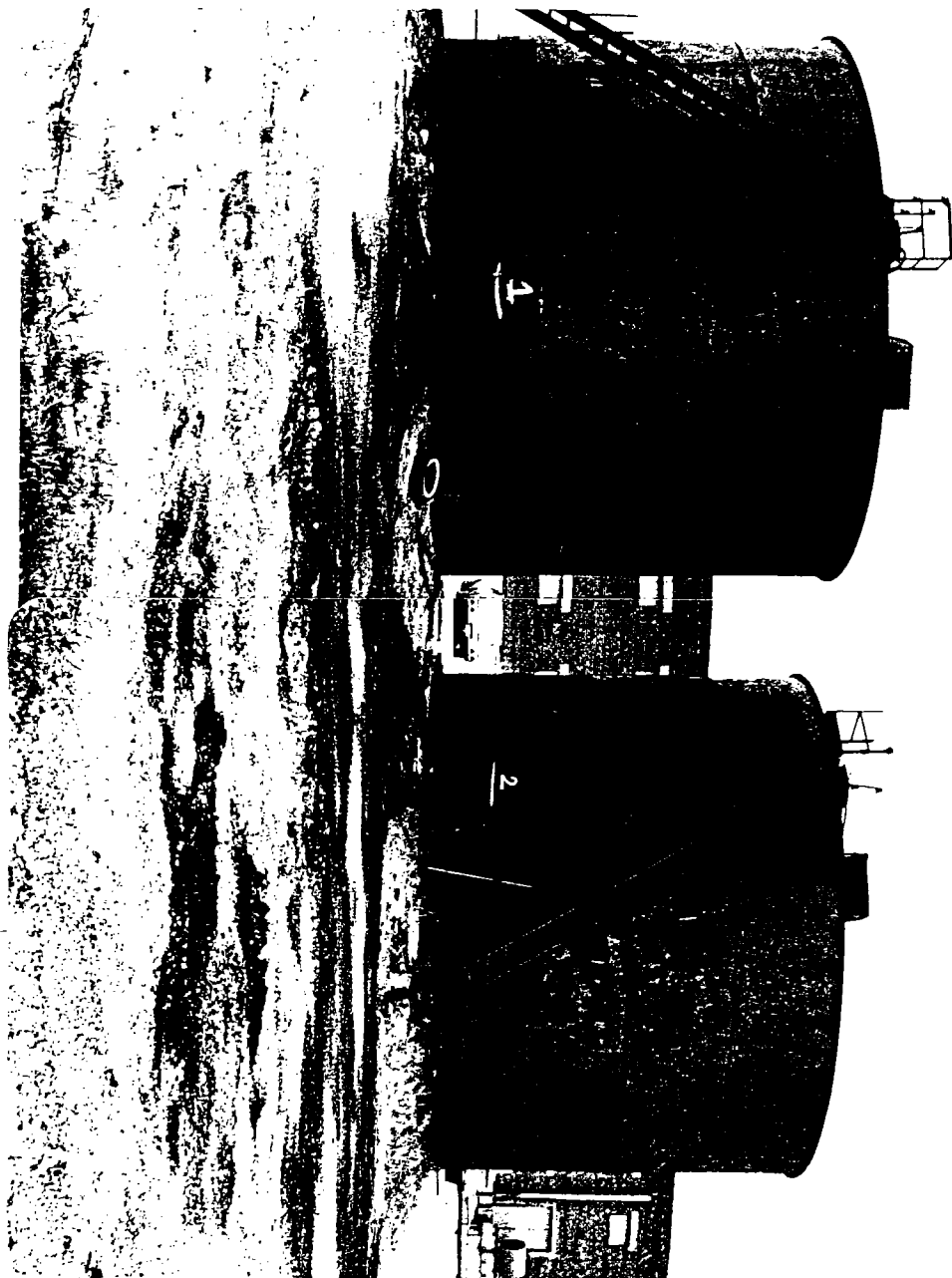
Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the Northeast



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 2:50 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

Patrick Casey

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the Northeast



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 3:00 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

Patrick Casey

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the South



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 3:00 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

Pat McCarty

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the South



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 3:01 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

Pat McCarty

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the South



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 1:55 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P.M. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice

/ GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the Northwest



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 1:55 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P.M. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison

Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the Northwest



RECEIVED

JUL 5 1983

E.P.A. — D.L.P.C.
STATE OF ILLINOIS

L/NPC 24 6/78

Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 2:05 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the North



Date: June 9, 1983

Time: 2:10 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the Southeast



150N

- LPC

11910504

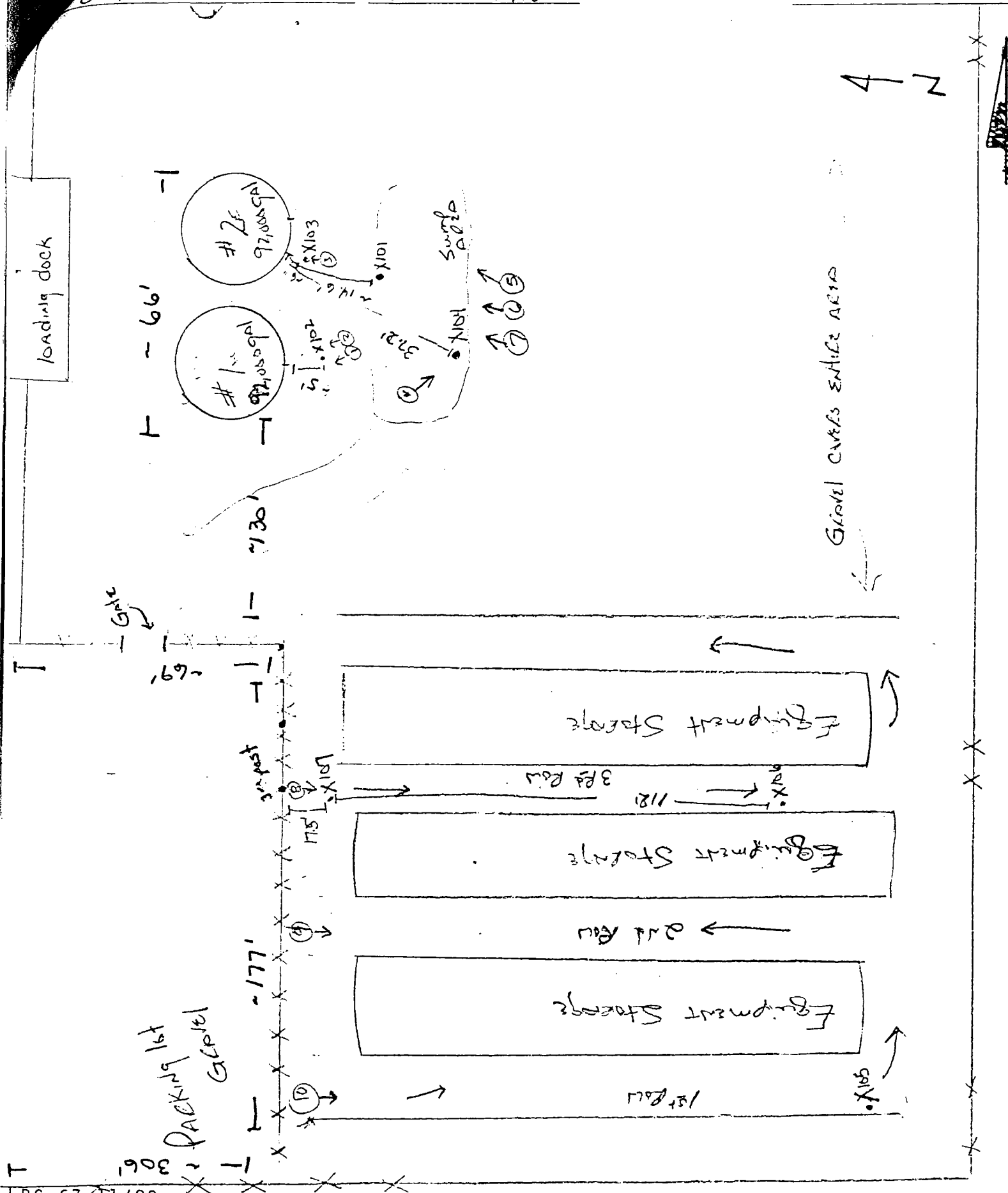
DATE: 6-10-83

ENICE

/ G.M.I. - 8/155

TIME:

4-2



Date: June 13, 1983

Time: 2:40 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the North



Date: June 13, 1983

Time: 2:40 A.M. P.M.

Photograph By:

P. McCarthy

Location: LPC 11910504

Madison Co.

Venice / GMI & Bliss

Comments: Photograph taken

toward the North Northwest

